(c) Steps taken to augment underground coal production *inter alia* include opening of new mines, *modernisation* of existing mines, application of new technologies to achieve maximum results and ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities.

Low productivity in under-ground Mines

5821. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 828 given in the Rajya Sabha on 20th March, 1995 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one of the major constraints on the profitability of the coal sector is low productivity in under-ground mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how these compare with the productivity of major coal producing countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During 1994-95 output-per-manshift (OMS) of the underground mines of the Coal India (CIL) was 0.56 tonne and in Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) OMS was 0.69 tonne.

(c) Available productivity figures in terms of output-per-manshift (OMS) for underground mines of some of the major coal producing countries of the world are as under:

(Figures in Tonnes)

Countries	Under-ground	Year
Australia	15.60	1992
France	3.9	1990-91
Germany	5.20	1992
India (CIL)	0.56	1994-95
(SCCL)	0.69	1994-95
Poland	1.90	1990-91
United States	18.00	1992
UK	8.76	1993

Direction to cancel pending allocations of sponsored coal by Coal India Limited

5822. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Coal India Ltd. has instructed its subsidiaries to cancel all pending allocations of sponsored coal made to the non-sector industries as on December, 1994;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to cancellation of indents by the Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries small units will be the most affected;

(c) whether Government has received any representation from the India Coal Merchants Association on the above cancellation stating that the cancellation was unlawful and unjust; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government to redress the grievances of these small units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (d) According to information furnished by Coal India Limited (CIL) consents of coal companies for supplies of coal had validity only till the end of the month/ quarter, except that three subsidiaries of Coal India Limited (CIL) has a different practice. It was decided in January, 1995 to adopt a uniform system in all subsdiaries of CIL as a result of which one months grace period is to be allowed at the end of the a quarter after which the remaining consents lapse. This measure was taken to deal with the problem of heavy backlogs and to avoid blocking of customers money for an unreasonable long periods.

Some suggestions in this regard have been received from Indian Coal Merchants Association. Government's perception is that the decision is not

likely to have a negative impact. CIL have informed that coal is being supplied to consumers against current sponsorships.

Clubbing of lignite with F & G Grade of Coal for royalty rates

5823. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Lignite was clubbed with F&G grade of coal as far as royalty rates are concerned during 1990-91;

(b) if so, the reasons for separating it from F&G grade of coal while revising the rate of royalty on coal under Government notification dated 12th October, 1994;

(c) whether Government of Gujarat has represented to the Central Government for its claim of higher rates of royalty;

(d) what action has been taken by Government on the request of the State Government;

(e) whether Government are aware of the fact that Government of Gujarat is suffering revenue loss due to the inaction on the part of the Central Government; and

(f) if so, when the Central Government will decide the Government of Gujarat's claim for higher rates of royalty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Royalty on Lignite was fixed for the first time in July, 1990, at Rs. 2.50 per tonne. Lignite has been categorised as Grade 'V' coal along with 'F' & 'G' grade non-coking coal. Rates of royalty on coal were earlier revised in August '91. The rate of royalty on lignite was not revised at that time as its revision was not due. The rate of royalty on lignite continues to be at Rs. 2.50 per tonne though the rates of royalty on coal have been further revised recently.

In the recent past, a proposal has been received from the Government of Gujarat for revision of royalty rates on lignite and also for allowing higher royalty on lignite produced in Gujarat.

(d) to (f) A Study Group has been constituted in the Ministry of Coal in March '95 to examine the question of revision of rate of royalty on lignite as also the request of the State Government and all other relevant issues.

Methods adopted for Coal Mining in Orissa

5824. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the different methods adopted for coal mining in different coal mines in Orissa;

(b) whether it is a fact that coal mining is going on in unscientific way in some coal fields in Orissa;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken to identify those coal mines and take necessary steps to take up coal mining activities in a scientific and systematic way; and

(e) the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The choice of method of mining, whether opencast or underground, is generally dependent on factors like nature and geometry of coal deposit, geo-mining conditions and techno-economic and environmental considerations. Depending on these factors both underground and opencast methods of mining are in vogue in the coalfields of Orissa.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.